Adult Education Directors' Meeting

November 19, 2008 Granite Peaks High School, Salt Lake City, Utah

Attending: Kip Bromley, John Nielsen, Steve Chadaz, Britt Simcox, James Stephenson, Deanna Sweet, Lucille Durrant, Scott Greenwell, Darece Sperry, Carolyn Davis, Gwen Callahan, Claudia Thorum, Lynne McKenna, Ann Kane, Cathy Adamson, Laura Layton, Ken Kapptie, Alison Tanner, Steve Schofield, Amy Boettger, Lory Curtis, Todd Bird, Raymond Nielsen, Sewke Grenke, Nicky Kimball, Mike Louder, Blaine Fackrell, Scott Carson, O'Dee Hansen, Kelly Paskett, Loma Prince, Eulogio Alejandre, Judy Tukuafu, Anita Craven, De Ann Tompson, Dennis Crane, Stew Shaver, David Chavez, Mindi Holmdahl, James Andersen, Ted Heal, Ralph Squire, Brian Olmstead, Chad Peterson, LouAnna Haynes, Linda Conway, Mark Dockins, Vickie Todd, Patty Lundin, Nelda Kissinger, Sue Meyers, Elaine Jensen, Marty Kelly, Jeff Galli, Sandra Grant, Shauna South, Becky Peters, Kellie Tyrrell, Mary Shumway, Susan Patterson, Janet O'Neill, Julee Smith, George Knighton, Terry Linares

Welcome—Marty Kelly

Open Comment to Rule 277-733 Adult Education Programs

First Round Comments

Deanna Sweet, Carbon: Section 8, letter V, line 539 Regarding either GED or Adult Ed HSD. It seems that a 16-17 year old is not mature enough to make that decision that affects the rest of their life.

Vickie Todd, Wasatch: Section 7, number 3c, line 407 16 year old returning to high school after completion of GED/AHSC. Students may think they can complete high school if they can complete an adult education program and that option is closed to them upon completion of adult education program/GED.

Lynne McKenna, Granite: Section 1, letter G, ability to grandfather students already working toward a high school diploma and need the credits from the GED to complete the diploma and being given the time (2 year period) to complete the diploma. There is precedence for grandfathering in a 2 year time period in the state office.

Laura Layton, Granite: Section 1, letter Y. Questioning the initial assumption of equivalency diploma. I would like to see more investigation from the Board and all stakeholders involved. I do not feel that it is truly an equivalency diploma. There is a content differential. GED is reflective of reading abilities and not necessarily content mastery.

Amy Boettger, Jordan: I would like to add to Laura's comment that there is a fair amount of scholarly literature that the GED is not a high school equivalency and I would be happy to provide a position paper on that premise.

Steve Chadez, Box Elder: I have a concern with the state looking at dropouts. When a student leaves a school to attend an adult education program the student is recorded as a dropout. I would like a way to report to the state that the students who enroll in an adult education program and successfully complete the program or a GED would be reported as a successful high school completion as part of the school district AYP report.

Lory Curtis, Jordan: Section 1, letter D. The words "or its equivalency diploma" should be removed. GED stands for general education development and is not equivalent, therefore not a diploma.

Brian Olmstead, South Sanpete: Additional comment about the definition Section 1, letter Y lines 134-135. I am concerned about the equivalency of the GED to the full four year high school experience. The increased graduation standards of the traditional K-12 and adult education programs have a higher standard than the GED.

Loma Prince, Ogden: Section 1, letter Y, line 138-139, The UHSED is a certificate (rather than the word diploma) issued by the State Office of Education. It should be changed to "Utah General Education Development Certificate."

Elaine Jensen, Weber: no comment

Jim Stephenson, Cache: clarification—We were told the catalyst was the audit and I am not seeing the connection. I am getting the feeling that this is a done deal and we can comment all we want and it may not make any difference.

John Neilson, Beaver, Section 1, Letter Y. When we give a diploma it is issued by the district. According to this USOE, (GED testing centers) will be issuing the diploma for passing the GED. It will be taken out of our hands.

Jim Andersen, Salt Lake: Section T-definition of out-school-youth. A 16 year old can get a GED and return to the K-12 program. The definition needs to be expanded so that districts do not get funding for students in an adult education program—double dipping—adult education program receives funding for GED outcome and district receives WPU upon students return to K-12 program.

Claudia Thorum, Granite: Section 1, Y: I think that section should be eliminated because the GED is not equivalent to a diploma. This would also change/modify the definition in Section 1, letter O.

Alison Tanner, Granite: Section 8, letter V, line 533. Regarding someone who takes the GED is no longer eligible to continue in the adult education program. I feel that this is taking away choices from the students. Students are finding that there is a disadvantage to not having the high school diploma in the workforce and in the military as not all branches of the military accept the GED. The student should have the opportunity to complete a high school diploma; the choice should not be taken away. Strike the verbiage "Utah High School Equivalency Diploma", and "may continue in an adult education **only** to improve basic literacy skills."

Judy Tukuafu, Park City: If the state of Utah values first class workers and values education highly, saying that a GED is equivalent to a high school diploma is a fallacy. High school offers cooperative learning experiences, research, financial literacy, healthy lifestyles and many other learning opportunities that lead to a better prepared employee. A GED waters down the quality of the workforce of the 21st century.

Ralph Squire, South Sanpete: In my opinion as a former principal, the Board needs to listen to the superintendents in regard to Section 1, letter Y. The superintendents need to have a say in this board rule.

Darece Sperry, Davis: A GED is not an equivalent because it does not require demonstrated competency in core areas and essential workplace skills, including computer technology, career and technical education, health, fine arts and financial literacy as well as academic discipline.

Dennis Crane, San Juan: Section 10, D2, line 617. Remove the double dipping by changing the funding formula. Adult education programs would receive partial funding upon completion of the GED and then the remainder of the funding upon completion of the high school diploma. This does not affect student choice of achieving both GED and/or secondary diploma.

Kip Bromley, Alpine: Section 10, D2 Addendum to Dennis Crane's comment. I think double dipping became an issue as a way to cut costs. I believe adult education is a cost effective way of educating adults. We operate on shoestrings.

Ted Heal, Salt Lake: Line 407 Concerned about out-of-school youth returning to K-12. Who is going to monitor students who receive a GED in Granite district and then enroll in Salt Lake district?

Susan Patterson, Granite: If I get a GED in Spanish, or any other language, do I get a Utah equivalency diploma?

O'Dee Hansen, (Adult Education Director and K-12 Counselor) North Sanpete: Section 7, letter D, 4. Not eligible to return to K-12 or adult education programs. I think we are doing a

disservice to students if we do not allow them to come back into K-12 or adult education programs to learn the skills to continue, once they have completed the GED.

Scott Carson, Nebo: Section 7, D. We have grave concerns with 16 year olds taking the GED. I see three problems: 1-I don't see school boards tolerating a swinging door situation where students go back and forth between K-12 and adult education, 2-we set students up for failure, i.e., at risk students, and 3-we are providing an incentive for kids to drop out of school that might not otherwise drop out.

Todd Bird, Jordan: Section 1, Y. If we must award a diploma for passing the GED, then I would rather it would be worded "Utah High School General Educational Development Diploma."

Louanna Haynes, Tintic: Addendum Dennis Crane. If we are to adjust the funding formula, don't take away the students' option to earn both the GED and secondary diploma. Students are finding that not all branches of the military accept the GED.

Stewart Shaver, Sevier: Section 1, letter Y line 425. We could change the word equivalency by adding the word 9th grade or junior high in front of the equivalency diploma.

Second Round Comments

Deanna Sweet, Carbon: One thing that occurred to me is the workforce. 16 year olds do not have the same rights in the workforce as older persons. What are these 16 year olds going to do once they have this diploma? What happened to mandatory education to age 18?

Laura Layton, Granite: Section 8 letter H 1E, line 453. Re: passing all GED tests. I would rewrite this so that if someone passes the GED before July 1, 2009, those 5 units of credits can be used at any time for a diploma. I would strike that part that says they have to be in UTopia as adult learners are sometimes on a long range plan.

Amy Boettger, Jordan: Section 7, D3. I would like to see this requirement (SEOP discussion) presented at the K-12 level and not the adult education level. I would like to see a requirement of counseling at the K-12 level before they are released. I see this as an inherent conflict of interest for the adult education program.

Claudia Thorum, Granite: If in fact the GED awarding of credit is regulated by GED testing services, I would like to see a substitute competency exam to allow students to have credit awarded based on mastery of curriculum replace the five units of credit.

Judy Tukuafu, Park City: Section 4, letter M, teacher credentials. If they already have the two credentials they should be set. It also seems that it should be an internal policy rather than a Board rule. Adult education does not have a student teaching experience such as K-12.

Brian Olmstead, South Sanpete: Address everything in yellow and red. As we propose something to the Board, we should be focusing on the audit issues. The audit clearly says that we need to something about residency and something about funding. I think the GED issue crept in, and the audit did not ask us to address this issue. Let's make the corrections necessary to address the audit. I don't think we should rush forward on the GED issue.

Gwen Callahan, Emery: I think we have all been insulted by the equivalency issue. I think the audit says the GED is the end of the high school experience. I think we are all concerned about having something for the 16 year old out-of-school youth. We can go through all of this line by line, but the bottom line is that we are still hung up on the "equivalency" issue. There are other ways to deal with 16 year olds and out-of-school youth. I don't want to take away from the high school experience to address the 16 year olds.

Terry Linares, Superintendent, Tooele: I am also concerned about the 16 year olds. We are responsible for the rigor of high school. A GED is not equivalent. LEAs should be part of the process. There needs to be further conversation and looking at all the options available to the student.

Jim Andersen, Salt Lake: I would like to go back to the definition of out-of-school youth. The definition needs to be expanded. The situation we are creating in connecting K-12 counselors to adult education is encouraging more students to become out-of-school youth. There is no data base to track students that have passed the GED. That would prevent students enrolling in another district allowing that district to generate funds.

Scott Greenwell, Davis: Our state school board members are elected officials. Elected officials do not always make the right decisions. But at the same time we have an obligation to let the board know that there isn't an adult education director or coordinator who believes that the GED is really the equivalent of a high school diploma. At the same time, I don't believe that there are any adult education directors or coordinators who cannot live with an either/or funding for outcomes for the GED and secondary diploma. I just don't want to see our funding cut, instead, combine the two outcomes into a single funding source.

Alison Tanner, Granite: Section 10D2. I think there should be more discussion on the either/or proposition. I think there should be a way to appropriately pay programs based on each situation.

John Nielson, Beaver: Funding issue. If a student gets a GED and that is the end of funding, how can we provide additional services for the student who wants to continue?

Claudia Thorum, Granite: If we are trying to address the 16 year olds, we should require that they are not shown as dropout if they are enrolled in adult education.

Mailed-in Comments

Donica Bigelow, Uintah: There is one talking point that I think needs to be emphasized to the directors today - THE FIVE CREDITS (TEN CLASSES) that have been associated with the GED WILL GO AWAY regardless of what the final outcome of this is. We are now going to be requiring adult students to spend OVER A YEAR more in school to get a diploma than we have been able to offer. For those worried about money, they will get another year of enrollment status for these folks and over a year of contact hours plus 10 more classes worth of credits if they think they can retain these students for that amount of time.

The bottom line for me is that this is an issue of perception. Nationally, business and industry support GED equivalency. By issuing an equivalency diploma, we allow students to mark the box on applications that reads, "Do you have a high school diploma". My experience has been that adults that do not have a diploma have apprehensions about pursuing post-secondary education and some employment fields because they don't believe they're qualified to approach these types of opportunities. The equivalency diploma will open doors for them and build confidence to pursue higher goals.

Those students lacking skills to complete a GED haven't lost anything. They will still be allowed to complete 24 credits and graduate with a diploma.

Summation Comments

Judy Tukuafu, Park City: Audit concerns of decrease in outcomes and enrollment.

(Repeated from above)

Brian Olmstead, South Sanpete: Addressing everything in yellow and red. As we propose something to the Board, we should be focusing on the audit issues. #1- The audit clearly says that we need to something about residency and something about funding. I think the GED issue crept in, and the audit did not ask us to address this issue. Let's make the corrections necessary to address the audit. 2- There is a concern is that the subcommittee is going to push the GED issue forward. It has not been thought through clearly how it impacts the **inschool** 16-17 year olds. This has not been clearly addressed. This rule should address the **out-of-school** youth only. The way it is written now any 16 year old can withdraw from the school district and move forward with taking the GED.(Jim) Other states that have a rule that allow 16 year olds to take the GED have a time frame written in the rule to clarify what out-of-school youth means.(Amy)

There have been so many components to this rule that have not been given full consideration. I don't think we should rush forward on the GED issue.

Raymond Nielson, Juab: I agree with Brian's comment.

Brian: I feel that there was some support from the Board; it might be a tough stand.

Jim: My concern is that the subcommittee is going to push the GED issue forward. I am hearing today that it has not been thought through clearly how it impacts the in-school 16-17 year olds.

Lory Curtis: I recommend that our comments be an agenda item to the superintendents meeting and that the superintendents should be encouraged to bring it to the Board.

Scott: Pull together a committee in your office to create a summary, send it to us to for feedback. We will send it back to you.

Marty: Turn around time needs to be Friday, November 21, 2008 at noon.

Lynne's recommendation—push to all adult education directors by noon tomorrow (Thursday, November 20, 2008), all directors should respond to their consortium member. The consortium member should respond to Marty by Friday, November 21st at noon.

Claudia will substitute for Jim.

Lunch

<u>Discussion on Residency Policy</u>

This is effective November 1, 2008. Programs must keep a copy of the documentation in the student file. Iron ran into the problem that the address listed on the programs paperwork did not match the address on the item provided for proof of residency. If the student provides proof of residency that does not match the residency information entered as demographic information in UTopia, they must have proof of one item that matches the UTopia data. If the person submits a driver's license in a name different from what is entered in UTopia, documentation of valid residency must still be submitted. It was reiterated that library cards are valid as proof of residency.

Funding Formula discussion

Yellow handout—funding formulas

Jeff: The UTopia data for program year 07-08 funds the program year 09-10. The year that we are currently in, program year 08-09, will fund program year 10-11. The data you generate in program year 09-10 will be used to generate funding in program year 11-12.

We have converted the formula from the fractions of the percentages to dividing the funding percentages to equal 100% so that the formula is clearer.

The current funding formula will stand as is through program year 10-11. This is shown on the left hand side of the handout.

On the right hand side is our funding formula response to the audit. The change occurs where the GED is combined with the high school diploma for funding the first outcome achieved. This will impact program year 11-12.

Jim: When you put 27% on the combined one outcome, we are encouraging people to get a GED rather than the high school diploma which is contrary to what we have been discussing. I think that we need to adjust the formula and raise percentages in other areas.

Lynne: ESL programs are at a disadvantage with this funding formula. I wonder if the funding formula should be adjusted to reflect a better ratio.

Jeff: The state office does not have a particular stance as to what the funding formula is. Whatever consensus this group can come up with would be good. However, this needs to be a discussion for another day, since I don't think we can come to a consensus for the next board meeting.

Brian: One of our concerns needs to be the UTopia data. We do not have good data from the previous school year as of yet. My question is should we go with level funding until our data is solid?

I would rather hold everybody harmless and flat fund everyone until we get good data. We are making a suggestion that we move to UTopia data, which is coming along and is one of the best things we have done in adult education, but it is not quite there yet.

Jeff: The numbers that I used were based on the legislative funds from last year. However, that is it not going to happen. We are not going to be funded at that same amount. We also have a new district coming on.

Judy: Since the funding changes do not take place for a couple of years and the board has not passed the proposed board rule, is this a bit premature?

Jeff: We have to act on the GED/AHSC before July 1, 2009.

A hold harmless simply means that we would disregard the UTopia data and fund programs at the dollar amount that they were funded this year. The URAED data, we have since come to believe is absolutely bogus.

Lory: I am a little perplexed. If we devalue the GED, I would be more inclined to go for the high school diploma. I would like to change funding percentages of credits and level gains.

Jeff: The last go-round of changing the funding formula took a chunk of time. We do need to have that conversation if there is a consensus that you want the percentages adjusted.

Jim: I think we need to look closely at how monies are allocated next year so that programs are not harmed. The present economic impact has filled our classrooms. I would support some type of funding that does not affect our funding too adversely so that we can provide the services.

Blaine: In the allocation of adult education funds, they are different than what you written here.

Jeff: We have taken out the 35% of 50%.

Blaine: My other thought is, I would like to see programs be able to save for a rainy day. You may not need to use the carryover this year, but you may need it in two years. Allow programs to be thrifty and use the carryover later.

Janet O'Neill: Several of us in here feel that the GED and the secondary diploma are two separate items. I also don't feel that we should be double dipping, but there ought to be some sort of way to pay for both items without double dipping.

Shauna: Can we come to a consensus of what other items percentages should be adjusted?

Lory: The Board will be ruling on the GED/AHSC being combined into one percentage?

Jeff: The audit did encourage us to look at the current funding formula and find something that is more amenable.

Jim: I think those will be long meetings to create a new funding formula. I don't think we can solve it now. But I think we need to make the statement that we need to move the money that would be earmarked for the GED into other areas.

Jeff: We can add that to our summary for the Board.

Deanna: The supplemental makes sense for programs in transition.

Ted: There is a difference between the value of a GED of someone who spends 2 hours versus someone who spends 3 months studying for the test. Same with the time spent on a high school diploma.

Brian: A quick history about the funding formula. We spent 2 years on the current formula. The math does work out. We wanted to look at a formula that moved from a census based formula to an outcome based formula. So we decided to put half the money towards outcomes and half toward base. Then we divided the half that was devoted to outcomes to the individual outcomes. We thought that it would be easy to adjust the individual outcomes. We need to follow the philosophy of the money and not who is the winner and loser.

A new philosophy may be that we don't fund the GED or diploma, but instead fund everything that gets you to the final outcome.

Janet O'Neill: Is it prudent to have something in writing for the Board this next week.

Jeff: We cannot change what is there, but we can provide documentation for what we want. Show of hands, who thinks what Brian said, is a good thing. (Majority concurred.)

Marty: I really like how you thought out of the box Brian. The majority of our students are not GED or high school completion students. They are ABE and ESOL students, almost 50/50. The targets for the federal issues need to be addressed.

Jeff: There is no way to know how much money you will get next year, but I have come prepared with data from UTopia based on this year's funding to give you an estimate.

Marty: Before Jeff starts with the funding formula, please remember it is very important that you have some sort of verification in hand for out-of-state GEDs. We have found some instances where a program did not have documentation of an out-of-state GED. Please check with your UTopia administrator, they received a list of non-verified GEDs that they should be checking for accuracy.

Jeff: We think that we are awfully close to what programs really did throughout the year. The dollar amount shown here is estimation as we do not know what the allocation will be for next year. We could go by percentages only if we hold harmless. This would be the only fair way to do a hold harmless. We would have to run this report differently based on those percentages.

Marty: We will be adding Morgan and South Summit programs back in as they are not figured in this report. Brian talked about holding harmless. Staff did an excellent job of entering data last year and are continuing to do so this year. The data you see here, UTopia data, is substantially more solid than any URAED data ever was. The bugs are less and less. Mostly the problems we are seeing have to do with the GED verification date.

Lory: We are not being held harmless; we are being harmed because of our mistakes.

Jim: I am concerned that the more you loosen the rules for the data, the more I lose. I am concerned that there are no consequences for audit reviews.

Marty: I discounted the discrepancies from the independent audits because it is a BETA year.

Janet O'Neill: Keep in mind that you were able to test UTopia before the rest of us and your learning curve came earlier.

Brian: I have a hard time with gaining funds while other programs are losing funds. We had a hard time with our audit and our data is not as clean as some others. As soon as you say that you loosen the rules, you say that we do not have reliable data.

Dennis: I don't believe that there is any other district like mine that reaches across several communities. The state has been liberal with the supplemental money which has helped us to address those needs. I would like to see a higher base per program.

Jeff: We can put funding on the next consortium meeting agenda.

Blaine: We talked previously about what we need in each program. In business, you do not know the amount of money you have. Funds are based on the needs of the business. Why not set up a budget plan based on program needs?

Dave: Who would make that decision on a hold harmless year and when would that decision have to be made?

Jeff: That decision would have to be made soon.

Dave: Marty, did I understand that you did not use the information from the audits.

Marty: Some programs called and requested extra reports, others did not.

Dave: Does that mean the data is bad?

Marty: The data in UTopia is good, it was the back-up documentation that was missing and that presented several auditors problems in validating the UTopia data.

Dave: I can agree with Brian, if you are relaxing the data so much, does it really reflect good data.

Marty: There is one other document that is going to the Board. I do not know if they have reviewed it as of yet. This is a consolidation of comments from adult education. I would invite you to go back to your superintendents and discuss these issues. I would invite you as an association to write a letter. I don't know if you showing up at the Board meeting would make the statement that you want made.

Would you want to meet in January to talk and go over the funding formula or would you like to wait until March?

Consensus: January.

Marty: Summer conference—we are still looking for topics that you and your teachers want for summer conference.

I also would like to know if your UTopia administrators would like to meet further with Toni via Wimba.

Deanna: Toni needs to be complemented on her work.

Marty: Thank you for today. This has been a positive meeting for us.